

**Select Board Meeting
Monday, June 22, 2020**

Virtual Meeting Broadcast on Comcast Channel 22 Verizon Channel 45

I. Call to Order

Chairperson Laura Gregory called the meeting of the Select Board to order at 5:00 P.M. via Web-X. Participating remotely from the Select Board: Alex Vispoli, Annie Gilbert, Dan Koh, Chris Huntress and Laura Gregory.

Others participating remotely: Town Manager Andrew Flanagan, Deputy Town Manager Michael Lindstrom, Assistant Town Manager Patrick Lawlor, Town Counsel Tom Urbelis, Town Clerk Austin Simko, and Director of Public Works Chris Cronin.

The meeting was duly posted and cablecast live.

Tonight's meeting is completely virtual. Residents can call in at 311 or 978-623-8311 or email manager@andoverma.gov

II. Opening Ceremonies

A. Moment of Silence/Pledge of Allegiance

The meeting began with a Moment of Silence followed by a Salute to the Flag.

III. 2020 Andover Town Meeting

The Special Legislation on COVID-19 gave the Select Board in every town the opportunity to delay Town Meeting if the warrant hadn't been signed. Andover's warrant was signed, so the Town Moderator became the decision maker on extending the meeting from June 22 to July 22nd due to health concerns. The Moderator can extend the date of the meeting incrementally by 30 days. Town Moderator, Sheila Doherty spoke to the Board about moving Town Meeting to September and asked for their input.

Laura Gregory: The delay at Town meeting is for health and safety reasons and there is no perfect time for Town Meeting. We are in exceptional circumstances this year and can't expect to have the same attendance as in previous years. She is in favor of holding Town Meeting outside in July with social distancing measures in place. She also has concerns of the schools going forward without full use of their budgets.

Annie Gilbert: Massachusetts COVID numbers are trending down right now and there is concern about the unknown if we wait until September.

Dan Koh: He is concerned about holding Town Meeting in July because we are not sure what the status of the COVID cases will be in Andover at that time understands there could be an increase of cases in the fall. We should be doing everything we can to avoid big crowds and the perception that it is ok to have big crowds again.

What would be involved in limiting the warrant down to pure necessities?

The Town Manager suggested that the Board remove the private warrants and vote only on town articles or withdraw articles on the floor of Town Meeting. The Warrant would have to be re-opened to remove Town articles but private articles cannot be removed.

If we were to not be able to have a meeting in September, what would the impact be?

Much of our capital work includes preparing bid projects in the fall and part of that process is showing the availability of funds, with the majority of work beginning in the spring. The window for bidding would get tighter and projects pushed out to prior years. The Town can move forward with a 1/12 budget but eventually the window to adjust for that uncertain period closes. It becomes more challenging, but it is doable.

What was the response to the North Andover Town Meeting held outdoors?

Sheila Doherty said some people thought there was not enough discussion and articles were bunched together; it was a very abbreviated process. Other people thought it was a great venue.

Part of our Town Meeting includes a number of presentations. If the Warrant is not reduced it will be a challenge for our voters who are used to seeing the information projected, which they won't be able to do outside. If the meeting is outside, it should be on a Saturday morning to avoid any threat of Triple E

Annie Gilbert: Given that AHS Graduation is going forward and they are allowed to bring two guests sends a mixed message to residents, saying one event is ok, but the other isn't.

Austin Simko: Several towns chose to hold their meetings in September, but they may have been in a different circumstance because they hadn't yet signed a warrant. His concern about a summer Town Meeting is the weather and turnout.

Chris Huntress: Legitimacy should be a primary goal and he is concerned about pushing a month to month budget. We should hold the meeting in July and asked if Town staff could start looking at a draft warrant and share it with the Board. The Town Manager will put together a draft and send to the Board.

The Town Moderator thanked everyone for their input.

IV. Implementation of Phase 3 of Drought Management Plan

The historic demand for water is attributed to a combination of the dry weather and residents being home as due to COVID-19 resulting in a dramatic impact on water systems across the Commonwealth. The Town Manager is requesting the Board issue a declaration of State of Water Supply Conservation and to implement Phase 3 of the Drought Management Plan. Mr. Flanagan provided an overview of the Drought Management Plan with Phases 3 last implemented in 2016.

Phase 1: Watch phase and request for our 25 largest users to voluntarily reduce water usage.

Phase 2: Warning phase with mandatory restrictions on water usage to our 25 largest users. Request for voluntary conservation from all users.

Phase 3: Emergency Phase of the DMP authorizes the Town to impose mandatory water restrictions consistent with the Town's Water Use Restriction bylaw adopted in 2002. Mandatory restrictions would begin with the water system's 25 largest users in conjunction with an appeal for voluntary conservation for all other public users.

Phase 4: Critical Phase that implements maximum response to a water supply emergency with all other phases intensified.

On Thursday, there was a spike in the demand for water to over 14M gallons, the highest ever. Irrigation at town/school properties was reduced by 75% and they continue to check for leaks. On Friday, the demand spiked to 15.5M gallons, on that day North Reading imposed mandatory water restrictions on residential irrigation effective immediately which will have an effect on Andover's demand. The 25 largest users were notified by telephone on Friday and asked to voluntarily reduce consumption in anticipation of mandatory restrictions potentially being imposed as early as next week. Yesterday, they continued with the voluntary demand for all users and today they continued the dialogue with the 25 largest users which should have a positive effect.

Phase 1 and Phase 2 of the DMP was implemented over the weekend. Phase 3 requires a vote of the Select Board. The status of the water supply will be re-evaluated daily.

In Phase 3, the Town would have the ability to enforce the bylaw with fines issued (which has never been done and not being proposed tonight). If the Board votes to issue the declaration, a code red call has been prepared to send out to residents.

Despite the challenges presented by the weather and the increased demand, the distribution system has held up well and DPW has received no reports or complaints of discolored water. This data is being tracked so that the Board can see a year over year comparison at a future meeting.

Questions/Comments by the Select Board:

When the North Reading Water Agreement was being negotiated there was plenty water capacity, at this point in time are we worried about the water treatment's capacity to process this much water or are we worried about the supply of the water.

The capacity of the Water Treatment Plant is 18M gallons and we have enough water supply. North Reading is experiencing the same concerns as Andover. Reasonable irrigation practices will assist us in getting back to manageable levels. The challenge we are having is the extra 2M gallons over last year of water going to irrigation. We are meeting the demands in Andover and North Reading.

Concerns about the terminology being used. Is this more of a shortage than a drought? When sending out the public message be very clear on what is happening and why.

Residents will be asked to take voluntary measures and they will direct people to the website that will include all recommendations available on how to conserve water.

Is there any concern with the water quality due to the spike in demand?

There is no concern with the water quality, which is high right now, and we are not getting an abundance of calls on discolored water.

The Town Manager agreed that the message must be carefully worded.

Dan Koh moved that the Board issue a Declaration of State of Water Supply Conservation and to implement Phase 3 of the DMP and authorize the Town Manager to take any necessary actions related thereto. Annie Gilbert seconded the motion. Roll call: D. Koh-Y, A. Vispoli-Y, A. Gilbert-Y, C. Huntress-Y, and L. Gregory-Y. Motion passes 5-0

V. Adjourn

At 6:14 P.M. Alex Vispoli moved that the Board adjourn from the meeting of June 22, 2020. The motion was seconded by Chris Huntress. Roll call: D. Koh-Y, A. Vispoli-Y, A. Gilbert-Y, C. Huntress-Y, and L. Gregory-Y. Motion passes 5-0.

Respectfully submitted

Dee DeLorenzo
Recording Secretary

Documents: Drought Management Plan